



United States Department
of Agriculture

National Agricultural
Statistics Service

USDA/NASS
Washington Field Office
P.O. Box 609, Olympia, WA 98507
(360) 902-1940 Fax (360) 902-2091

Washington Crop Weather

Released: April 21, 2008
Week Ending: April 20, 2008
CWP WA-CW1408

Unusually Cool Conditions Prevail as Frost Impacts Fruit Growers While Winter Wheat Looks Good Field Crops

Days suitable for fieldwork were 4.6. In Whitman County, unusually cool temperatures and rain slowed crop seeding and tillering of winter wheat. Other grain growing counties reported cool temperatures and wind delayed spraying. Dry conditions persisted in Benton County. In general, seeding continued, but at a slow pace. Grain development was delayed but no significant reports of winter wheat damage had been noted. Processing pea planting continued. Grant County reported field and sweet corn plantings had begun. Christmas tree growers continued fertilizing plantations.

Fruits and Vegetables

In the Yakima Valley, most fruit trees were between bloom and petal fall. Cold nighttime temperatures continued with lows in the mid to upper 20s. While growers were still assessing fruit bud damage in the orchards, cold temperatures may have significant impact and may thin this year's soft and pom fruit crop in the upper as well as the lower Valley. Elsewhere, Asian Pear producers expressed concern over the impact of sub freezing temperatures on trees in full bloom. Whatcom County reported berry growers continued using frost protection measures as did orchards in Grant County.

Livestock

Range and pasture conditions were 1% very poor, 7% poor, 51% fair and 41% good. On the western side of the Cascades, hail storms and snow stopped cattle from being released to pasture. On the eastern side, cold temperatures halted pasture growth. Asotin County reported some producers were feeding cattle longer than normal before turning out on grass. Other counties reported hay supplies were low at most area ranches.

Days Suitable for Fieldwork

Week	Days
This Week	4.6
Last Week	5.0

Moisture and Supply

Item	Percent			
	VS	SH	AD	S
Topsoil	0	6	64	30
Topsoil 5 Yr Avg	1	12	74	13
Subsoil	4	17	74	5
Subsoil 5 Yr Avg	6	21	69	4
Irrigation Water	0	0	89	11
Irrigation Water 5 Yr Avg	2	6	90	2
Hay & Roughage	22	23	55	0

VS=Very Short SH=Short AD=Adequate S=Surplus

Crop Progress

Crop/Activity	Percent Completed			
	This Week	Last Week	2007	5 Yr. Avg.
Spring Wheat Planted	57	45	69	75
Spring Wheat Emerged	25	20	30	42
Winter Wheat Headed	0	0	0	1
Barley Planted	33	32	72	64
Barley Emerged	13	11	26	31
Field Corn Planted	17	8	23	22
Field Corn Emerged	1	0	10	3
Potatoes Planted	45	32	52	55
Potatoes Emerged	5	0	16	13
Dry Edible Beans Planted	15	5	39	26
Proc. Green Peas Planted	37	35	37	59
Dry Peas Planted	18	16	50	41

Crop Condition*

Crop	% Acreage				
	VP	P	F	G	EX
Winter Wheat Dryland	1	6	37	49	7
Winter Wheat Irrigated	0	2	9	78	11
Spring Wheat Dryland	0	4	60	36	0
Spring Wheat Irrigated	0	6	25	59	10
Barley Dryland	0	6	53	41	0
Barley Irrigated	0	7	16	54	23
Potatoes	0	0	26	74	0

VP=Very Poor P=Poor F=Fair G=Good EX=Excellent

* Crop conditions are a measurement of the growing conditions and are not indicative of the quality of the crop produced.

Washington State University
Cooperative Extension Service
Linda Fox
Dean/Director, WSU Extension

USDA
Farm Service Agency
Jack M. Silzel
State Executive Director

USDA/NASS--Washington Field Office
Dave Knopf - Director
Alan Funk- Ag Statistician

COUNTY COMMENTS

Western

Clark: Another weekend of cold and unsettled weather made outdoor activities challenging.

Clallam/Jefferson: The temperatures were cooler. No crop damage was reported.

Grays Harbor: Unseasonably cold temperatures combined with hail storms and snow accumulations limited agricultural activities. Cannery pea producers took advantage of several dry days to do field cultivation. Christmas tree growers continued fertilizing plantations. Retail nurseries and garden stores reported very slow bedding plant sales due to the cold weather. Dairy producers continued applying liquid manure to forage fields. Asian pear producers expressed concern over the impact of sub freezing temperatures on trees in full bloom.

Grays Harbor/Lewis/Pacific: A few fields were getting worked but it was still too wet for most farmers to do much. Some beef animals were grazing but the dairy animals had not been let out on grass yet. The dairymen had not started cutting silage yet.

Island/San Juan/Skagit: The area had unusually cool weather, with scattered snow and rain showers. Planting was delayed due to wet conditions in some fields. There were some reports of damage to seed crops planted in the fall.

Kitsap: The area had record low temperatures. Snow and frost conditions slowed production.

Mason: The area received .5 inches of precipitation in all forms. Pay berries were set back by the ice pellets. The area was a couple of weeks behind on everything.

San Juan: The area had cooler than normal temperatures. Cold, snow, and hail slowed field work at the end of the week.

Skagit: The area experienced wet and cold weather. It snowed an inch on Saturday.

Snohomish/North King: The temperatures had been considerably cooler for the time of year. The producers were reporting that the pasture grasses were a month behind normal.

Snohomish/King: There were only a couple of days suitable for field work. Standing water remained in many fields. The area received snow on Friday. Many areas over 500' received snow on Saturday and Sunday with sub-freezing temperatures over night. Cold temperatures slowed pasture growth and fields were soggy. Stone fruits were in bloom but it was too cold for pollinators to work. Local beekeepers were feeding bees to keep them from starving. It was too cold for honeybees to gather nectar and pollen for rearing brood from the eggs that had already been laid. Mason bees and bumbles were "in hiding" until it warms up. The wintery weather had thrown everything in "neutral." Producers are unable to do much until temperatures and precipitation moderate.

Thurston: Unseasonably cold and wet weather continued to limit agricultural activity this past week. Snow accumulations of up to 1.5 inches were reported over the weekend as temperatures plummeted well below freezing. In general, the cold temperatures and persistent rainfall continued to delay field cultivation. Christmas tree growers continued fertilizing plantations and applying post-emergent herbicides. Retail nurseries and garden stores reported very slow sales of bedding plants due to the cold weather. Livestock producers were repairing fences and fertilizing forage fields. Home gardeners, who would normally be setting out bedding plants this time of the year, were found shoveling snow.

Thurston (2nd Report): The area has had two frigid springs in a row.

Whatcom: The area had another unseasonably cold week. Saturday and Sunday, temperatures dropped to freezing with periods of snow. Berry producers continued to apply frost protection measures to their crops. The cool weather slowed the new growth.

Central

Benton: Moses Lake had temperatures around 23 degrees with a dusting of snow. Hay development was behind. Crops were just sitting there.

Benton (2nd Report): The county's dryland regions could use some timely rain for developing crops. Continued below freezing temperatures were threatening orchard crops with bud damage.

Douglas/Chelan: Colder than normal conditions continued. The week was also very windy. Rain and snow were received over the past weekend. Freezing temperatures caused losses to the cherry crop; estimated loss was between 5 and 10 percent. Frost protection measures were being conducted for stone fruit. Winter wheat growth was behind normal maturity by about 10 days, as were early spring pastures. April 15th is normally the beginning of the grazing period for livestock producers in Chelan and Douglas Counties. This year that did not happen due to the lack of growth of grasses. Livestock producers were beginning to run out of feed, but had nowhere to take their animals at this time. Some of the winter wheat was still under snow. Some replanting of failed winter wheat due to winter kill and snow mold was taking place.

Franklin: Temperatures at the beginning of the week moved up into the high 60s and 70s. Toward the end of the week temperatures moved back down into 50s and 60s for the day time with night and early morning temperatures reaching the freezing mark. Concerns at the end of the week escalated in the tree fruit industry as bud damage potential increased with these low temperatures. Potato, green pea, dry pea, field and sweet corn planting continued. Ground was being worked up in all parts of the county for planting of crops.

Grant: Unusually cold temperatures over the weekend might have caused bud damage to fruit crops. Helicopters were busy flying over orchards to help prevent frost damage. Field and sweet corn plantings had begun. Fresh pea planting continued. Dryland wheat looked good, but could use some precipitation.

Kittitas: Temperatures were still cold, with little crop development. Areas of the irrigated valley received snow, and night temperatures were below freezing. Rangeland forage growth was at least three weeks behind.

Klickitat: Unseasonably cold weather caused frost damage to forage crops and pasture was stunted. Frost caused moisture to rise to the top and wind dried out the soil. Pasture grasses on the south slopes of the Columbia Hills had already headed out.

Klickitat (2nd Report): Cold temperatures continued to frustrate everyone. Wheat was not growing well. Spring planted crops were slow to germinate under cold conditions; all farming was getting off to a late start. Cows and calves were turned out to pasture in some places. Some ewes and lambs were brought into corrals for feeding, all depending on available pasture and range conditions. Vineyards along the Columbia Gorge from Dallesport eastward were vulnerable but still safe from freeze damage up to the end of the week. Growers were very nervous about the clear nights and cold air. Plant sales were slow at Earth Day events as cold and windy days hampered yard work.

Yakima: Average temperatures varied from 15 degrees below normal to 1 degree above normal, with a trace of precipitation. Temperatures as low as 18 degrees caused growers continued use of frost control measures.

Yakima (2nd Report): Trace amounts of precipitation scattered throughout the Valley. Most fruit trees were between bloom and petal fall. Cold nighttime temperatures continued with lows in the mid to upper 20's. Growers were assessing fruit bud damage in the orchards. These temperatures were like to have had significant impact and thinned this year's soft and pom fruit crops in the upper as well as the lower Yakima Valley.

Eastern

Adams: The week saw cooler temperatures with a few windy days, slowing crop progress and making spraying activities a challenge. The weekend got downright winter-like again, with some snow flakes riding in on a blast of arctic air.

Adams (2nd Report): Severe cold nighttime temperatures limited producers from applying herbicides on winter wheat. Most spring cereals were planted but warmer temperatures were needed to help in its development.

Asotin: Cool weather continued as spring seeding progressed in the higher elevations. Timely rainfall will soon be needed in the lower elevations.

Asotin/Garfield: Cold and dry conditions prevailed. Farmers continued planting spring crops with good progress. Emergence of spring crops was very slow due to the cold weather. Farmers had not been able to spray crops due to freezing temperatures at night and windy conditions during the day. Rangeland growth was well behind normal due to the cold weather. Some producers had fed cattle longer than normal before turning out on grass. Very dry conditions in approximately 50 percent of Asotin County had also hurt rangeland and crop conditions.

Lincoln: Rain received early in the week delayed fieldwork and the planting of crops for some producers. Warmer growing weather was needed for crops that had been seeded. The cold weather prolonged the feeding of cattle for some ranchers, because some pastures had not grown enough to let the livestock out on them. Some producers were still feeding cattle and reported that they were almost out of hay.

Lincoln (2nd Report): Similar to previous weeks, warmer weather would benefit spring cereal planting conditions and improve the winter wheat crop.

Pend Oreille/Spokane: A week of rain, wind and snow more typical with late March than the third week of April had farmers concerned about getting into the fields. Another concern was the freezing weather and the condition of stone fruits. A number of cattlemen had to purchase additional hay because of a lack of pasture to graze. For the most part the winter wheat looked pretty good, but there were a few reports of snow mold and wheat that needs to be reseeded.

Stevens: Hailstorms, snow flurries, and rain pelted the area. Up to four inches of snow covered parts of the county during the weekend. Cold temperatures halted pasture growth and crop development but field work continued between weather events. The local fertilizer dealer reported a decrease in volume due to high prices. Hay supplies were very low at most area ranches.

Walla Walla: Extreme cold temperatures over night impacted orchards and vineyards throughout the area. Some spring planted cereal grains may be showing some damage as well. Winds continued to slow down attempts to spray crops. Overall winter grains looked good.

Walla Walla (2nd Report): The area had two days of summer and then winter returned. Wheat looked pretty good, except for where there was wheat soil borne mosaic virus. Green and dry pea seeding progressed. There was a field of canola that was trying to bloom. Alfalfa was growing. Pastures were coming on slowly. Hay was really short for those that need to feed.

Whitman: The week started with temperatures cooling from the previous weekend's spring like warm weather. Rainfall brought .5 to .75 inches in most locations of the county. Temperatures remained cool but fairly dry allowing continued field work. Western parts of the county were wrapping up spring seeding. The central part of the county was midway through spring work with the eastern part of the county just beginning. Moisture conditions remained very good but warmer weather would be welcomed. Many western operations were holding off on applying herbicide to winter wheat until warmer temperatures become more prevalent.

Whitman (2nd Report): Cold temperatures continued in the Palouse. Winter wheat was only 2-3 tillers in Eastern Whitman County and 7-8 tillers in Western Whitman County.

Weekly Weather Statistics

April 21, 2008

STATION	AIR TEMPERATURE				GROWING DEGREE DAYS				LAST WEEK PRECIP			SEASON CUM PRECIP			
	LO	HI	AVG	DFN	BASE-50F		BASE-60F		TOTAL	DFN	DAYS	TOTAL	PCT		
	---	---	---	---	TOT	DFN	TOT	DFN	INCHES	---	---	INCHES	DFN	NORMAL	DAYS
WEST															
Bellingham Intl	32	54	44	-6	0	-7	0	+0	0.12	-0.51	3	20.86	-7.74	73	138
Everett	32	53	42	-8	0	-10	0	+0	1.48	+0.85	6	27.31	-1.32	95	145
Hoquiam	35	55	46	-4	0	-14	0	+0	0.77	-0.24	6	48.66	-10.05	83	156
Kelso	36	57	44	-6	0	-14	0	+0	0.54	-0.23	6	28.44	-10.12	74	112
Olympia	29	57	43	-6	0	-7	0	+0	0.78	+0.04	5	39.54	-4.39	90	138
Seattle-Tacoma	34	57	45	-5	1	-12	0	+0	0.54	+0.02	6	29.60	-1.89	94	134
Shelton	27	57	42	-8	0	-14	0	+0	0.23	-0.67	3	51.76	-5.82	90	137
Tacoma WA AP	33	57	43	-8	0	-13	0	+0	0.26	-0.37	5	27.99	-5.61	83	124
Vancouver WA	35	58	46	-4	2	-12	0	+0	0.44	-0.19	5	31.41	-3.13	91	126
CENTRAL															
Ellensburg	19	60	43	-6	1	-9	0	+0	0.04	-0.10	2	5.18	-1.87	73	54
Omak AP	24	66	44	-3	4	-3	0	+0	0.00	-0.28	0	5.37	-4.69	53	47
Stampede Pass	22	50	32	-3	0	+0	0	+0	0.95	-0.16	5	59.68	-10.23	85	148
Wenatchee	29	65	46	-6	8	-16	0	+0	0.00	-0.14	0	3.80	-2.56	60	38
Yakima AP	18	69	43	-8	3	-16	0	+0	0.00	-0.13	0	5.23	-1.10	83	46
NORTHEAST															
Colville	25	63	45	-3	4	-4	0	+0	0.17	-0.18	2	12.42	-2.89	81	89
Deer Park	24	58	40	-7	0	-7	0	+0	0.43	+0.10	2	16.72	+3.09	123	108
Republic	26	69	44	+0	8	+1	0	+0	0.22	-0.06	2	8.79	-1.38	86	79
Spokane AP	27	57	40	-7	0	-7	0	+0	0.42	+0.16	3	13.56	+1.49	112	95
EAST CENTRAL															
Ephrata	21	65	45	-8	5	-19	0	+0	0.04	-0.03	1	3.81	-1.73	69	57
Moses Lake	24	67	45	-7	5	-19	0	+0	0.09	+0.02	2	3.86	-1.68	70	55
Quincy	25	64	46	-6	5	-17	0	+0	0.00	-0.11	0	5.66	-0.38	94	57
Ritzville	22	76	42	-6	9	+0	0	+0	0.21	+0.04	2	8.03	-0.62	93	73
SOUTHEAST															
Hanford	28	65	47	-9	6	-35	0	-7	0.02	-0.05	1	3.06	-2.14	59	38
Pasco	26	69	48	-7	11	-26	0	-7	0.12	+0.05	2	5.36	-0.46	92	55
Pullman	23	59	40	-7	0	-7	0	+0	0.19	-0.16	1	13.81	-2.20	86	92
Walla Walla Rgn	34	65	46	-7	2	-27	0	-1	0.27	-0.12	1	10.55	-4.53	70	83
Whitman Mission	29	83	49	-3	15	-7	2	-2	0.23	-0.05	2	9.22	-1.14	89	85
WESTERN IDAHO PANHANDLE															
Lewiston ID	30	82	49	-3	20	-5	5	-1	0.01	-0.27	1	5.31	-2.75	66	71

Summary based on NWS data.

Season Cumulative Precip Starts: Friday September 1, 2007

DFN = Departure From Normal (Using 1961-90 Normals Period).

NA = Data Unavailable

Precipitation (rain or melted snow/ice) in inches.

Precipitation Days = Days with precip of 0.01 inch or more.

Air Temperatures in Degrees Fahrenheit.

Copyright 2006: AWIS, Inc. All Rights Reserved.

National weather summary: <http://usda.mannlib.cornell.edu/reports/waobr/weather/2007/summary/weth1606.pdf>

Washington Agricultural Statistics Service website: http://www.nass.usda.gov/Statistics_by_State/Washington

E-mail: nass-wa@nass.usda.gov

Free e-mail subscriptions are available via automated mailing list for National and State reports. You can subscribe to individual reports and they will be sent directly to your e-mail address soon after the official release time. Subscribe at:

<http://www.nass.usda.gov/sub-form.htm>